



# 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

· BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS ·



MECKLENBURG COUNTY

# Code Enforcement

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LUESA

The Mecklenburg County Land Use & Environmental Services Agency (LUESA) is delighted to present to you the reimagined annual report for our Code Enforcement division for Fiscal Year 2016-17.

In the pages that follow, you will learn how we are working to serve you, our customers, better each day. We are not just working on streamlining our processes and workflows, we have embraced a new vision emphasizing our priorities of collaboration and customer service. Along with local municipal and state authorities, we are proud to partner with our customers to efficiently, effectively, and collaboratively build a safe and thriving Mecklenburg County.

We were also excited to promote Patrick Granson to replace Jim Bartl as the new director early in the fiscal year, when Jim retired after 20 years of exemplary service to Mecklenburg County. Patrick's dedication to customer satisfaction has been demonstrated over the years, and he has already continued this emphasis in his first year. From our state-of-the-art customer service center at our new headquarters on Suttle Avenue to our award-winning "Building With Our Veterans" program, which trains veterans to become code officials, we have relentlessly pursued innovative ways to meet customer demand for our services.

Please read about these and our many other accomplishments in FY17. We look forward to another year of customer-focused service and partnership.

Ebenezer S. Gujjarlapudi, P.E.  
Director, Mecklenburg County Land Use & Environmental Services



# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CODE ENFORCEMENT

The staff of Mecklenburg County Code Enforcement is pleased to present its annual report. At Code Enforcement, our mission is to ensure the safety of people who live, work, and visit buildings in Mecklenburg County by ensuring those buildings comply with North Carolina Building Code.

At the same time, we hold customer satisfaction in equally high regard. We view ourselves as teammates with the building industry, and we want our customers to have a fantastic experience building in Mecklenburg County, because a thriving economy benefits us all.

In this report, we detail some major reorganization in our division aimed at providing more efficient, timely service to our mega and multifamily customers. We completely reorganized our inspections process as well, focusing on more efficient completion of inspections by organizing around construction type instead of geography. Both of these changes have already been a tremendous help to our customers.

We also recognized our 2017 Code Heroes, just a few of the many customers who represent that team spirit that we prize, and help to build a safe and thriving community every day.

We are proud of the work detailed in this report. We hope you will take a few moments to see what your Code Enforcement partner is doing for you.



Patrick G. Granson, MCP, CBO, LEED-AP  
Director, Mecklenburg County Code Enforcement

# BUILDING DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

The Building Development Commission is an advisory board that makes recommendations to the County Board of Commissioners and Code Enforcement staff on development-related ordinances, budget, service delivery, fees, division performance, and public opinion.

## 2017 MEMBERS

**Jonathan Bahr**

Chair

Charlotte Chamber of Commerce

**Travis Haston**

Vice Chair

National Association of the Remodeling Industry

**Chad Askew**

**Glenn Berry**

AIA Charlotte\*

**Hal Hester**

**Paul Stefano**

Charlotte Plumbing, Heating & Cooling Association\*

**Benjamin Simpson**

American Society of Landscape Architects,  
North Carolina Chapter

**Michael Stephenson**

Greater Charlotte Apartment Association

**John Taylor**

Associated Builders & Contractors, Inc.

**Tom Brasse**

Home Builders Association of Greater Charlotte

**Rodney Kiser**

Charlotte Area Association  
of Electrical Contractors

**Rob Belisle**

**Andrew Kennedy**

Professional Engineers of N.C., Charlotte Chapter \*

**Terry Knotts**

Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, Small Business

**Melanie Coyne**

Public Representative

**Scott Shelton**

Charlotte Heating & Air Contractors Association

**Wanda Toler**

**Walter Kirkland**

Public Representative\*

*\*Indicates that the representative for this seat changed during the fiscal year.  
All representatives who served during the fiscal year are listed.*



# WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

Code Enforcement saves lives and  
prevents injury by ensuring buildings in  
Mecklenburg County are safe  
and compliant with  
North Carolina Building Codes.

# YEAR IN REVIEW

## NEW DIRECTOR

In August 2016, **Patrick Granson** was named director of Code Enforcement. Mr. Granson has already served 26 years with the agency, serving as everything from building code official to director of permitting and plan review. Mr. Granson's focus moving forward is on customer-centered enhancements to the agency's service delivery.

## CUSTOMER SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

Code Enforcement **revamped its Inspections division** to allow inspectors to work with a smaller group of customers, so that they can better build those relationships. Inspections is now organized by Residential, Commercial and Mega-Multifamily teams, and we're not finished refining yet! In FY18, there is an increasing focus on enhancements for our Mega-Multifamily customers.



County Manager Dena Diorio (center) and LUESA Director Ebenezer Gujjarlapudi (right) receive the 'Best in Category' 2017 NACo Achievement Award for Building With Our Veterans from NACo President Hon. Bryan Desloge.

Staff also continued work on **technological enhancements** and revisions to our online customer portals and web apps. These ongoing changes will substantially improve the online experience for our customers.

## CODE HEROES

Amec Foster Wheeler, Barringer Construction, and Optima Engineering were recognized as 2017 Code Heroes for their dedication to code-compliant work that contributes to a thriving Mecklenburg County.

## RECOGNITIONS

**Building With Our Veterans**, our code official training program that recruits, trains and hires eligible veterans, has been recognized by national and state agencies as an important innovation. The national Association of Counties (NACo) recognized the program as one of “100 Brilliant Ideas at Work” and gave it a 2017 “Best in Category” Achievement Award. Building With Our Veterans also won a 2017 Innovation Award from the N. C. Association of County Commissioners.

Code Enforcement’s **Hybrid Collaborative Delivery Team** also received a 2017 NACo Achievement Award.



# HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO

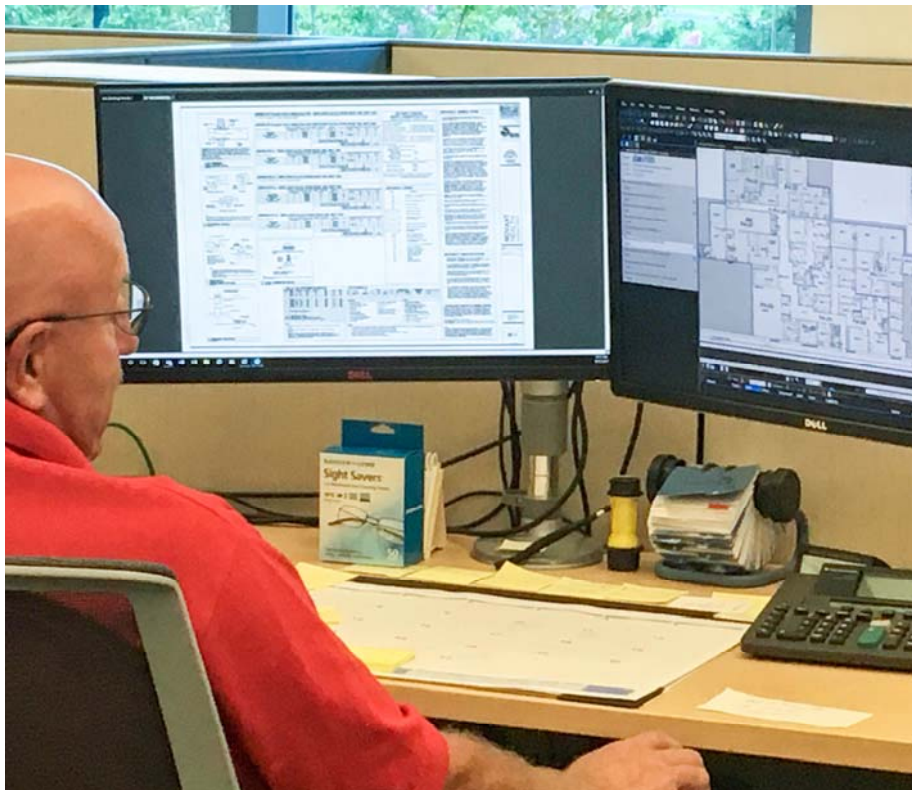
Code Enforcement's core functions are permitting, plan review, and inspections. The majority of staff and resources are dedicated to those functions, along with support staff who manage the technological, administrative, and financial functions of the agency. Our processes are virtually paperless, and customers do most of their business through our online portals. Code Enforcement's mandate is to ensure life safety by ensuring building code compliance. Here's how that happens in Mecklenburg County:

## PERMITTING & PLAN REVIEW

Under North Carolina law, most commercial and residential construction requires a

permit. This includes all new construction, but could also include renovations, repairs, demolitions, upfits, changeouts or upgrades. Our staff issued nearly 97,000 permits in FY 2017 (see page 8 for details). These permits cover building, electrical, mechanical, and plumbing trades, and some special work. Usually, plan review is required in advance.

Our plan review services center around the project's needs — residential, small commercial, large commercial, projects that utilize alternative delivery methods, and mega/multi-family projects.





## INSPECTIONS

Inspectors check work as it is being completed in the field to ensure that it conforms with approved drawings and meets all code requirements. Inspections has overhauled its services this year to focus around keeping the same inspectors throughout a project when possible, to foster stronger customer relationships. In FY 17, the inspections team reorganized to focus on residential, commercial, and mega-multifamily projects. County staff completed more than 302,000 inspections in FY 17 (see page 9 for more).

As FY 17 was closing, the inspections team was refining its processes further, focusing on keeping the same code officials with customers throughout the life of the project, both plan review and inspections. This is currently the case for projects using alternative delivery methods, and this transition has begun for mega and multifamily projects.

# BY THE NUMBERS

FY17 Revenue	
Permit revenue	\$28,364,943
Other revenue	\$4,220,039
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$32,584,982</b>

FY17 Expenses	
Expenses	\$27,798,638
Encumbrances	\$179,392
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$27,978,030</b>

*Note: Code Enforcement is entirely funded by user fees.*

## Plan Review & Permitting

	FY16	FY17
Permits issued	90,198	96,723
OnSchedule (large commercial) plan review		
- Number of projects reviewed	2,696	2,853
- First review pass rate (all trades)	73%	74%
- Second review pass rate (all trades)	86.8%	87.3%
CTAC (small commercial) plan review		
- Number of projects reviewed	1,347	1,224
- First review pass rate	63.83%	76%

*Notes: Most large commercial projects are reviewed in our OnSchedule plan review stream, and most small commercial projects are reviewed in our Commercial Technical Assistance Center (CTAC) plan review stream. Staff interpret increasing pass rates as an indicator of design professionals who are well-versed in the code, Code Enforcement staff who are being communicative with customers, and strong, collaborative relationships with our customers.*

## Inspections

	FY16	FY17
Inspections performed	265,520	302,693
Average inspection response time (days)		
- <i>Building</i>	1.33	1.35
- <i>Electrical</i>	1.58	1.44
- <i>Mechanical</i>	1.47	1.36
- <i>Plumbing</i>	1.48	1.38
- <i>All trades</i>	1.46	1.38
Inspection Pass Rate		
- <i>Building</i>	71.7%	76.8%
- <i>Electrical</i>	79.3%	84.3%
- <i>Mechanical</i>	85.1%	86.8%
- <i>Plumbing</i>	90.4%	88.2%
- <i>All trades</i>	80.3%	84.0%

## Customer Service Center

	FY17
Walk-ins assisted	44,467
Average wait time (goal: 85% in less than 15 mins.)	10 mins., 3 secs.
Phone calls taken	114,634

*Note: These numbers are for Code Enforcement customers only.*



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